

👉 How to Handle the Word of God

👉 **Review: Is the Bible really God's word? Reasons to trust the Bible:**

There's more evidence that the Bible is a reliable source than there is for any other book from the ancient world.

- The Bible's unity: 66 books written in different literary styles, by 40 different authors with diverse backgrounds over 1600 years and yet contains **one central message**. No one ever called a meeting and said, "Hey, let's write a book."
- The Bible's **transforming power**
- **Archaeological**: 1000's of archaeological finds in the Middle East support the Biblical record.
- **Prophecies** fulfilled: The Bible is the only book in the world that has precise, specific predictions that were made 100's of years in advance and that were literally fulfilled.

👉 **What is the central message of the Bible?**

- **"Redemption"**
- **This world is not as it should be**. Mankind was designed to have a close relationship with God and even partner with him in overseeing the Kingdom, but **sin disrupted that original plan**.
- God continually reaches out to mankind in order to restore the plan, but mankind continues to rebel and persist in sin. So **God sent his very own son** to fix everything once and for all. We can now be included in God's plan by submitting to the authority of Jesus Christ.
- God will very soon personally come to earth and finally put an end to sin and rebellion. Then his original plan will be fulfilled and **we will rule with him!**

Today:

👉 **We believe the Bible is the inspired Word of God and the only infallible guide and rule of our faith and practice.**

Peter explains inspiration this way: no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men, moved by the Holy Spirit, spoke from God. (2 Peter 1:21, NASB)

And Paul says this to Timothy: all Scripture is God-breathed... (2 Timothy 3:16)

👉 **Inspiration = breathed from within. It means that God spoke through men.**

👉 **Not...**

Natural inspiration = "boy, that was inspiring!" like any great literary work, such as Socrates or Shakespeare.

1 Corinthians 2:13

This is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit, expressing spiritual truths in spiritual words.

👉 **Universal inspiration** = all Christians can hear God's voice, but we are not all inspired in the same way as the Bible writers. If this was so, a new bible could be written today.

👉 **Mechanical inspiration** = God dictated and the writers were just passive instruments of the Holy Spirit. "Automatic writing." If that were so, we'd expect the same style to be used throughout, instead, we see various writing styles.

👉 **Partial inspiration** = a mixture of divinely inspired revelation and non-inspired human thoughts. If so, who decides which is which?

God inspired the thoughts and even the words used in the Bible. Since it was God speaking through men, we believe the Bible was free from error in the original manuscripts. (infallible)

Now, inspiration does not mean that everything stated is approved by God. Rather, it contains exactly what God wants it to. Job's friends said things that God did not agree with, so we shouldn't accept their thoughts as truth. However, we believe God wanted those comments included in the Bible so that we can learn from them.

--INSTE... Our attitude toward the Bible will determine our willingness to put into practice its principles. If we believe the Bible is the divine word of God it will mold our values, attitudes, judgments and actions.

If we believe the Bible is really God's word we should study it and live by it. So how do we study it?

👉 **2 Timothy 2:15**

Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, **accurately handling the word of truth.** NASB

👉 **5 Rules of interpretation:**

1. Interpret everything literally unless clearly indicated otherwise.

A day is a day. Jonah really was in a large fish. However, the kingdom is not literally a field with a pearl in it.

2. 👉 Consider the context.

What is the main message and how does what I'm reading relate to the overall idea?

1 Corinthians 6:12a says, "everything is permissible..." But in the context it is obvious that Paul is quoting someone and then disagreeing with it. He goes on to say "but not everything is beneficial," and "I won't be mastered by anything." In the larger context he's talking about sexuality and how some people think that anything goes, but Paul argues that some sexual practices are immoral.

3. 👉 Consider the cultural and historical background.

Who is writing? To whom is he writing?

In Corinthians Paul is correcting carnal Christians. In Ephesians Paul is expressing big theological ideas. In Titus Paul is giving instructions to a local church pastor. In Revelation John is reporting a vision he saw.

Knowing the cultural and historical background helps make sense of what is said. Writing a letter to my wife would be much different than writing a letter to the board of elders.

4. 📌 Use clear passages to understand unclear passages.

Let the Bible interpret itself.

1 Timothy 4:10 describes Jesus as the Savior of all men. Does this imply universalism?

Romans 10:9 says you must believe in the resurrection and confess Jesus is Lord.

Mark 16:16 says you must believe the good news and be baptized.

2 Corinthians 7:10 says you must repent.

5. 📌 Don't try to parallel every detail of a parable with reality.

In Luke 18, Jesus tells the parable of the persistent widow. The point is we should pray and not give up. But if we try to make a parallel on every point, we would end up with God being an unjust and uncaring judge.

That's good advice about how we should study the Bible. Now, let's answer the 📌 question, "How do we live by it?"

📌 1. Adopt a daily quiet time.

Develop a regular, intentional plan for reading the Scriptures. Numerous reading plans are available online. Here are a few:

📌 www.bible.com/reading-plans

www.biblegateway.com/reading-plans

www.biblestudytools.com/bible-reading-plan

www.ewordtoday.com/year

www.oneyearbibleonline.com

--Discipleship 1:1... Notice that "quiet" is the key word. Noise becomes interference. Quiet time is the definite time set aside each day for prayer, meditation, and the study of God's Word. It is from the quiet time with God that we derive strength, wisdom, and guidance for each day. Without a daily devotional life we become spiritually anemic, starved, and easy prey to the devil. The quiet time is much like a spiritual shower or bath. It washes, refreshes, and revives us. It helps to protect us from the moral corruption around us. And it prepares us, as Christian soldiers, to engage in a spiritual war.

Joshua 1:8

Do not let this Book of the Law depart from your mouth; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful.

Colossians 3:16

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly...

So, read the Word regularly and ask the Holy Spirit to speak to you and reveal his heart as you read.

👉 2. Apply it.

James 1:22

Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says.

How do we apply the Word to our lives? By asking these questions as you read...

👉 **S** – Is there a sin for me to avoid?

👉 **P** – Is there a promise from God for me to claim?

👉 **E** – Is there an example for me to follow?

👉 **C** – Is there a command for me to obey?

👉 **K** – How can this passage increase my knowledge about God or Jesus Christ?

👉 3. Affirm its value:

--We Believe (book)...The Bible is the Book of books. And though it is thousands of years old, it is still more relevant today than the evening news, tomorrow morning's newspaper, the Google homepage, or any book downloaded to any tablet. As theologian AZ Conrad affirmed, "This Book outlives, out loves, out lifts, outlasts, outreaches, outruns, and outranks all books."

👉 Psalms 1:1-3 **(it makes us stable and prosperous)**

Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked or stand in the way of sinners or sit in the seat of mockers. **2** But his delight is in the law of the Lord, and on his law he meditates day and night. **3** He is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither. Whatever he does prospers.

👉 Psalms 119:11 **(it helps us avoid sin)**

I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you.

👉 Psalms 119:105 **(it gives us guidance)**

Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path.

👉 Acts 17:11 **(it helps us know and recognize truth)**

Now the Bereans were of more noble character than the Thessalonians, for they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true.

☞ Romans 10:17 (**it builds our faith**)

Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ.

☞ **This is our creed: “The Bible is the Word of God and has the right to command my belief and action.”**

--Carman...

☞ **This is my Bible**

I am what it says I am

I have what it says I have

I'll do what it says I'll do

This is my Bible

It has given me new life

It is the Word of God

When I'm lost and gone astray

It helps me find my way

When I quote it I will see

The devil has to flee.

Closing prayer.

Carman youtube video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qYEvY9KIH1c>